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NATION'S WILD LIFE RESOURCES  
INCREASE WHILE LIABILITIES DECLINE.

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Washington, D. C.

--The Government's accounting to the American

people of its stewardship of their wild animals and birds during the past fiscal year, as exercised through the Bureau of Biological Survey, United States Department of Agriculture, is contained in the bureau's annual report, made public to-day.

In its supervision over the wild life resources and liabilities of the Nation, the Government deals with those birds and animals of distinct value to agriculture, commerce, and industry as well as with those injurious species whose natural habits in years past have cost the country many hundreds of millions of dollars. On the asset side of the balance sheet the total mounts; and the liabilities, thanks to the increasing efficiency and thoroughness of the Government's supervision, are shrinking. Sketched in its high lights and dealing only with major facts and totals, the bureau's work during the past year shows among other things the following results:

A saving to farmers and stockmen of about \$11,000,000 during the year--at a cost of \$1,345,220--in the campaign west of the Mississippi against wolves, lynxes and bobcats, coyotes, mountain lions, bears, and rodents.

Destruction by rifle, trap, and poison of approximately 50,000 of the predatory animals.

Continuation, with marked success, of the work begun 5 years ago of ridding the ranges--and thereby making them safe for grazing--of predatory animals.

Saves \$11,000,000 Annually.

An unrelenting campaign against prairie dogs and ground squirrels, during which 18,331,861 acres of Federal, State, and private lands were given a first poison treatment and follow-up work was done on 4,402,662 acres. One hundred thousand farmers and stockmen took part in the work; 1,235 tons of poison grain were prepared and distributed under the bureau's supervision; and an annual saving of more than \$11,000,000 is estimated to have been effected through this phase of the bureau's work alone.

Wholesale destruction in Idaho, Oregon, Washington, Nevada, Utah, and Arizona of jack rabbits whose foraging annually damaged alfalfa, cotton, hay, and other crops to the extent of millions of dollars. In one Idaho county alone, 168,166 jack rabbits (actual count) were killed, and in other counties as many as 50,000 jack rabbits were disposed of in organized drives.

The beginning of active and intensive campaigns against meadow mice and pine mice whose depredations in orchards, gardens, and truck farms, annually mount into the millions.

Destruction in one campaign alone (in Texas) of 670,000 rats by actual count, and continuation of the Nation-wide campaign against this most destructive and ubiquitous of rodents.

Protection of valuable fur-bearing animals, encouragement of their importation, and study of best methods for successfully raising them. The rearing of silver, black, and cross foxes alone has grown to the extent that during the past year there were 340 fox ranches in this country having 4,350 breeding animals with stock and equipment valued at more than \$4,280,000.

Its investigations have resulted also in protection for the great army of birds which are of inestimable aid to the farmer; checking, so far as possible, the depredations of the few feathered marauders which damage orchards and crops.

Continued and painstaking study of the habits of various kinds of birds that the valuable ones might more intelligently and definitely be determined.

Survey of the feeding grounds of migratory wild fowl and recommending measures for improving them.

#### Bird Migration Studies Continued.

In a continuation of the Nation-wide investigation on bird migration, the information of the survey covering habits, distribution, and migration of birds has increased and become very valuable.

Further study has been made of such injurious rodents as ground squirrels, pocket gophers, rabbits, kangaroo rats, and pocket mice in order that more effective means against their depredations might be found and made available for use by American farmers.

Under the protecting care of the bureau big game on Government reservations has multiplied fast. The animal census shows 508 buffalo on such reservations now, as compared with 207 five years ago; 504 elk, as compared with 159; 92 antelope, as compared with 40, and so on.

Care of the birds progressed materially during the year through posting and defining boundaries of many of the bird refuges, the planting of grain to provide food and cover, establishment of new reservations, provision of additional warden service at certain reservations, and increased number of patrol boats.

Its administration of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, which prohibits the shooting of migratory birds on their flight north in the spring and contains restrictions as to the manner in which they may be hunted during the open seasons, and of the Lacey Act, which regulates interstate shipments of wild animals and game, resulted in the apprehension of nearly 1,000 alleged violators of the Federal game laws and the securing of more than 500 convictions, in which fines were assessed ranging from \$1 to \$500 each.

Numerous seizures of migratory game birds illegally killed or possessed, the birds being disposed of by the bureau with the consent of the accused by gift to hospitals or charitable institutions for use as food, and seizures of contraband plumes and mounted specimens of migratory birds of an estimated value of \$5,000.

A notable increase among the migratory game birds is attributable almost solely to the limitation of spring shooting, the nonsale of migratory game birds, and the establishment of a uniform bag limit, the three fundamental restrictions made possible by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, according to the report.

Permits were issued for the importation from foreign countries of 182,052 birds and 5,363 animals, the latter including 1,574 black or silver foxes from Canada.

The foregoing states in bare outline some of the bureau's activities within the United States. In Alaska the bureau assumed, under the department, jurisdiction over all land fur-bearing animals, continued its investigation as to their habits and best methods for their protection, and enforced the laws prohibiting or restricting the killing of such animals. One of the chief items of interest in connection with the bureau's work in Alaska was its study of the reindeer industry in the Territory, with a view to establishing it on a sound basis, by improving the health and general condition of the herds.